



U.S. Department of Energy

Environmental Management Recovery Act

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NEWS FLASH

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Savannah River Site Resumes Transuranic Waste Shipments

"This important cleanup work illustrates DOE's commitment to clean up legacy waste sites through safe, permanent disposal."

--Garry Flowers, president and CEO, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions



Doug Wooldridge, left, transuranic waste shipping coordinator for Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, makes final checks before a transuranic waste shipment leaves Savannah River Site.

AIKEN, S.C. – The Savannah River Site (SRS) has resumed shipments of transuranic waste this month with an increasingly aggressive schedule made possible by American Recovery and Reinvestment funds.

Dating back to the 1970s, the transuranic waste consists of gloves, clothing, rags, residues, debris, and tools contaminated with radioactive elements that have atomic numbers greater than uranium.

The shipments, which will occur up to five times a week, won't end until all of the legacy transuranic waste inventory is gone from SRS. The goal is to complete shipments by December 2012. About 4,300 cubic meters of transuranic waste remain.

"We had to build the inventory back up," said Mary Rodriguez, SRNS Director of the TRU Program. SRNS manages the transuranic waste program at SRS.

"It is about a three-month process for them to do the characterization and certification before it even becomes eligible to load a shipment," Rodriguez said.

Since 2001, SRS has shipped about 30,000 drums — or 6,300 cubic meters — of transuranic waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico, according to SRS. There, transuranic waste is permanently disposed in rooms mined from ancient salt formations.

Overall, SRS received \$1.6 billion in Recovery Act funds, which has created thousands of jobs and accelerated cleanup activities.

"Our ultimate goal is to be one of the first large sites in the DOE complex to finish shipping legacy transuranic waste to WIPP," Rodriguez said. "Recovery Act funds are making a huge impact in reducing the TRU stockpile."

Transuranic waste cleanup has been completed at several small-quantity sites with the help of Recovery Act funds. This year, completions occurred at Vallecitos Nuclear Center and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Site 300 in California.



EM Environmental Management

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For more information about the Savannah River Site, please visit www.srs.gov.

For more information on EM Recovery Act, visit: www.em.doe.gov/emrecovery.